

THE
COBLER:

OR,

A Wife of Ten Thousand.

A BALLAD OPERA.

IN TWO ACTS.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

K. Giblin (C. / the Elder)

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. BECKET, the Corner of the Adelphi,
in the Strand. 1774.

[Price ONE SHILLING.]

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39
5-10
90



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE hint of the subsequent trifle is taken from the *Blaise le Saveteir, of Sedan*, as is the hint of the Club-scene from an essay of Dr. *Goldsmith*; and if the indulgent public find a few passable airs, and allow the dialogue to be worthy of filling the intervals, which are necessary in musical pieces, to set off the songs; I trust they will overlook the pictures of low life, I have in a manner considered myself obliged to draw as the proper subjects for ballads, which, unless they are familiar, and have something like character and contrast, 'tis next to impossibility but they must be dull and insipid.

C. Dibdin.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

S N O B,

Mr. BANNISTER,

NIPIKIN,

Mr. DIBDIN,

F R O T H

Mr. PARSONS.

W O M E N.

A L I C E,

Mrs. WRIGHTEN,

Mrs. NIPIKIN,

Mrs. LOVE.

The COBLER.

A C T I.

The COBLER's House.

SNOB, who sits at work, and ALICE.

A I R.

SNOB. **T**HREE pegs, and then I've done my job;

ALICE. Ab, do not jeer me ;

Will you leave me to complain !

SNOB. I'll go as sure as my name's Snob.

ALICE. Nay, prithee bear me,

Nor let poor Alice thus sue in vain :

Don't say me nay.

SNOB. My friends all stay ;

ALICE. And will you, will you go away ?

A word or two then 'ere you go :

I pray you tell me who am I ?

Far better, Sir, than you, I trow,

For all you lift your head so high,

Would I have been the 'Squire's Miss !

Didn't he offer mountains ?

SNOB. Yes.

ALICE. Then more brute you to use me so ;

For didn't I refuse him ?

SNOB. No.

ALICE. Why villain ! varlet ! to my face,

To tax me falsely with disgrace ;

I can most patiently endure

For you to be neglected—poor——

But this I swear,

Is more than I can bear.

B

SNOB.

2 *The C O B L E R: Or,*

SNOB. *Why, what's all this, you brazen quean?
Are you bewitch'd, or mad, or what?
Your wits are gone sure quite and clean;
Last week, you jade, have you forgot?
Didn't I, with a strap like this,
Trim well your jacket, hussey?*

ALICE. *Yes.*

SNOB. *Then how can you provoke me so;
For didn't you deserve it?*

ALICE. *No.*

SNOB. *Why, saucy baggage! Oh, disgrace!
The lie direct! and to my face!
I've borne, 'tis now the seventh year,
That vixen tongue of your's, my dear.
But this I swear,
Is more than I can bear.*

ALICE. *You to the alehouse then will go,
And leave poor me afflicted here:*

SNOB. *Only to drink a pot, or so,
Of Nipikin's delicious beer.*

ALICE. *You shan't, Sir.*

SNOB. *What, I shan't? Oh, ho!
Will you be quiet, hussey?*

ALICE. *No,
I won't. What sort of treatment's this?*

SNOB. *What still you brave me, do you?*

ALICE. *Yes.
Shall you thus squander every shilling,
While I'm as ragged as a colt?*

SNOB. *Why vixen!*

ALICE. *Varlet!*

SNOB. *Baggage!*

ALICE. *Villain!*

SNOB. *Hussey!*

ALICE. *Numscul!*

SNOB. *Slattern!*

ALICE. *Dolt!*

Both. *This, this, I swear,
Is more than I can bear!*

SNOB. Why, you jade, what do you prate at?—Isn't Saint Monday, and are not the club waiting for me?

ALICE. The club!—Yes, indeed, you need squander your substance among a parcel of raggamuffins, 'till you bring yourself, and your poor wife, to a jail.

SNOB. Why, you impudent vixen, are Master Muggins, Joey Jenkins, and Gaffer Grumble, raggamuffins? Is the pimple-nos'd Exciseman a raggamuffin? or are little Hone the barber, Lawyer Pest, and Mr. Confusion, the surgeon, raggamuffins? But I don't know what's come to you, since you have had the credit of being a tradesman's wife!

ALICE. O yes, great credit to be sure. Don't Mrs. Marmalade, the 'Squire's house-keeper, and every one of the other gentlefolks that I am acquainted with, turn up their noses; and don't they cry, only think that such a comely young woman, and one that has been so genteelly educated, should throw herself away upon such a fellow as Snob, the cobbler? But 'tis always your way: You don't know how soon Mr. Nipikin, our landlord——

SNOB. Ha, ha, ha.

ALICE. What's the matter with you?

SNOB. Ha, ha, ha. I can't help laughing if I was to die for it: To think of the old fool going about talking of his consequence, and smirking at every girl he sees.

ALICE. O, as to that, if report does not belie her, old Madam Nipikin is as fond of smirking after the fellows as he is after the girls: But, as I was saying, you don't know how soon he may take away the little we have.

SNOB. You are always dinning that in my ears, as if it was through my misconduct, that we are in such distress.

4 *The COBBLER:—Or,*

ALICE. Why will you face me down, that it is not through your misconduct? Are not all my misfortunes owing to you? Did not you come down into the country, when I was in my first place; and pretended that you were a young gentleman run away for killing your friend in a duel?—And did not I, because the butler was my sweetheart, contrive to get you into the house?—Did not you persuade me to get a key to the pantry? And was not I, upon your account, turn'd away—Oh, that I had never seen your bewitching face!

SNOB. Well, well, but Alice——

ALICE. And afterwards when I liv'd at the 'Squire's, at the same time you offered to take your oath that you lov'd nobody but me; had not you a child by the blind fidler's daughter? and was not I fool enough to give a year's wages to make the matter up.

SNOB. Alice, I tell you——

ALICE. But henceforward, sooner will I believe that a room can be clean without being swept; that brasses will look bright without being scoured; or that butter will come when the witch is in the churn; than that truth or constancy can be found in man!

AIR

A Wife of Ten Thousand.

A I R.

*Al! have you forgot then, unkind as you are,
When housemaid I liv'd at the 'Squire's;
All the wine and good things that I cribb'd with such care,
Every morn when I lighted the fires?
And have you forgot how I lean'd on my broom,
And in rapture heard all that you said,
'Till scolded I got for not sweeping the room,
And beat for not making the bed.*

R. II.

*When you told me you'd have me, my brush and my mop
Kept time, while with pleasure I'd sing:
And soon 'twas the talk at the chandler's shop,
You had purchas'd the licence and ring.
But when, with such joy, we return'd from the church,
And with truth I could call you my own;
You swore that I ne'er should be left in the lurch,
And I envied no Queen on her throne.*

SCENE

6 *The* C O B L E R : Or,

S C E N E II.

SNOB. The jade has suffered a devilish deal, that's the truth on't; and one way or other my circumstances are in a blessed way. If my Master Nipikin should seize my goods, as he swore last night he would, 'tis all over with us—Well, 'tis to be hoped something else will turn up—This is now about my twelfth metamorphosis; and, faith, I should be very sorry to throw it off; for I have tasted more satisfaction under the habit of a cobbler, than I ever did in any of my other characters, though a soldier, a mountebank, an exciseman, and an itinerant preacher, were among the number.

A I R.

*Like a tennis ball am I,
Now sinking low, now bounding high;
Bandied here, and bandied there,
To and fro, and every where.
Now on the topmost round
Of fortune's wheel I fly:
Now am I groveling found,
Beneath her feet to lie.
Still like a tennis ball I fare,
Now on the ground, now in the air;
Bandied here, and bandied there,
To and fro, and every where.*

*Contentment, health, and competence,
Are rarely found in any lot;
And therefore will I learn from hence,
To keep and prize the one I've got.*

SCENE

SCENE III.

ALICE, afterwards FROTH.

ALICE. How I am us'd, and after behaving to him as I do!—He does not deserve such a true and faithful wife; for I am sure, though I have never mentioned a word of it, that Mr. Nipikin has been trying a whole twelvemonth to make me bad, and I have always given him his own with a witness: And as for Dick Froth, the tapster, if I'd go off with him, I am sure he'd love me for ever; and every body knows that Dick, on account of his town-education, is the gayest young fellow in these parts: I don't mind being poor a bit, if I could but be us'd kind.—I have it: Dick's mistress, Madam Nipikin, is as fond of him as the old fool, his master, is of me; and so—but here he comes.—Your servant, Mr. Richard; what have you done with my husband?

FROTH. Why he is fairly set in with his guzzling companions; and so I thought I could not take a more properer time, than while you are left like a turtle here alone, to shew you the difference between him who deserts you, and him who would wish to deserve you—was not that very prettily said of me?

ALICE. Indeed, Mr. Richard, I don't understand being affronted so. I told you, you know, the last time you talked to me in this manner, that I'd tell my husband.

FROTH. Oh, my dear, I have been too much among the Bucks de Sprits of the age to mind husbands; besides, my dear, what you drink with your meals, need not hinder you from having a cordial privately in your closet—Prettily said again.

ALICE;

ALICE. I'll be even with you for all this impudence.—Well, Mr. Richard, you are so smart, and so clever; where the duce did you get all these winning ways?

FROTH. I don't know, my dear, they came naturally to me: Take pity on me, for stamp my vitals, as my Lord Huntingdon says in the play, if I en't immensely in love with you.

ALICE. How can that be, when your mistress—

FROTH. What, you are jealous of her?—Don't name the old frightful Jezebel;—why I only say a few civil things to her now and then, that I may be able to sport this appearance.

ALICE. And have you endur'd so much as you say upon my account?

FROTH. Endur'd! why, my dear, I have endur'd more than would kill ten horses; what with your cruelty, and the drudgery of making love to my mistress, I have endur'd more than ever Cannibal did, when he pass'd over the what-you-call-'ems, the frosty mountains to fight Skippio.

ALICE. And what would you say, if I was to be kinder?

FROTH. Say!—that—that—lord, I don't know what I should say.

ALICE. Well, if you'll promise to do as I would have you, I don't know but I may.

FROTH. Raptures and Paradise!

ALICE. You must favour the old woman, and get what money you can from her; I'll do the same by your master, and then when we have got a pretty good sum together, we'll march off, and let them find us where they can.

FROTH. What a devillish deal of wit you have—Well, I'll go about it directly—Bless you, I can wheedle her out of any thing—I say what a charming scheme

scheme 'twill be—I'll take care and have it put in all the papers. How prettily it will sound: "Last week
" eloped from her husband, Mrs. Alicia Snob, in
" company with a genteel young man, one Richard
" Froth, a tapster at the Black Ram, in the village
" of Guzzlewell; the reason of her committing this
" rash action is not known."——Adieu, I'll soon
bring you some of the old woman's cash.

SCENE IV.

ALICE. With this money, and what I can wheedle from the old man, will I fettle Snob's affairs; and who knows, when he finds I have done so kindly by him, but he'll repent of his follies, and behave better to me for the future. But suppose he does not—I must bear it as well as I can—for though I am not very wise, I have sense enough to know, that a woman who can consent to be wicked to revenge herself upon her husband, only takes a thorn out of her finger, to place it in her heart.

SCENE

C

AIR

A I R.

*Such usage as this is, what wife but myself
 Wou'd put up with, and not sigh and sob?
 No cros in her pocket, or food on her shelf,
 Or what husband wou'd let her, but Snob?*

*And yet let me hope, though for every crime,
 He had more than there's days in a year,
 That his heart is so good, I should still see the time,
 When a different man he'd appear.*

II.

*But if I'm deceiv'd, while another gues's wife
 So treated, would scold and revile;
 Though poor, though confin'd in a prison for life,
 With him, I'd endeavour to smile.*

*I love him, and every way I'll pursue,
 In my power, his affections to keep;
 And if then he should slight me, I've nothing to do,
 But to wish he was kinder—and weep.*

SCENE

S C E N E V.

NIPKIN, FROTH.

NIP. Well, now is every thing going as I would have it; are the company in the one, the two, the three, and the five, satisfied; do they say they have no reason to complain?

FROTH. Yes, yes, Sir, all satisfied. The company up stairs, who you know are always pleased, if there is any thing to be pleased at, are as merry; lord! they are laughing ready to split their sides; those below, indeed, look a little serious and wise; but to say the truth, they are generally such a pack of—

NIP. Hush, you young dog, hush! you don't consider that every thing must be recommended to them before it will get a good name abroad—What do they say who come in carriages?

FROTH. Oh, they are as good-natur'd as usual. You have nothing to do but to set Worcestershire Perry before them, and call it Champagne.

NIP. I won't suffer you to say these things before me, Mr. Richard: You don't consider, that to the guests, who frequent this house, I owe all I have in the world; and are under the same obligation to them all, from the club-room, where they call for twelve-penny worth of punch, to the best parlour, where they give five shillings for a bottle of Claret—But I must not stand idling here—See if your mistress has seen after the things—Coming, coming, there!

SCENE

S C E N E VI.

The CLUB ROOM.

SNOB, GRUMBLE, JENKINS, MUGGINS, CONTUSION,
PEST, the EXCISEMAN, and HONE, sitting round a
table. SNOB drunk.

SNOB. Mr. President, what you said last, is very true; if the people of this kingdom were but a little more regular in their manners, there would not be so much confusion as there is.

EXCISE. Come, let us knock down order, and proceed in the most promiscuous manner imaginable.

JEN. Mr. President, my service to you—And, Master Muggins, as to what you was mentioning just now, about the little thing I have to sell, there is not a prettier bit of horse flesh—

CON. Why, Sir, (*addressing himself to Hone, to whom he seem'd to have been talking before*) I was call'd in too late, without doubt, but it was as good a cure—

HONE. (*To Contusion*) How was the patient affected, Sir?

CON. Why, Sir, the contusion on his head had perforated the internal membrane of the occiput, and devlicated that radical small minute invisible nerve.

SNOB. Damn your invisible nerve!—drink about.

PEST. (*To Grumble*) Why, Sir, if you ask my sentiments, I should advise to bring an action of trover:

GRUM. (*To Pest*) Pray, Lawyer Pest, what may that same trover be?

MUG. (*To Jenkins*) How, trot fourteen miles and a half in an hour, and but twelve hands and a half high?

CON. (*To Hone*) And so, Sir, after a copious and plentiful phlebotomy, which——

PEST. (*To Grumble*) The court, you see, having ordered the things to be restor'd——

JEN. Why, at Nettle-down race, there were four fillies——

PEST. (*To Grumble*) The heirs in tail——

CON. (*To Hone*) And of all the compound fractures I ever saw——

MUG. Why, I tell you, this horse——

CON. (*To Hone*) His pulse——

PEST. (*To Grumble*) The judge——

JEN. (*To Muggins*) And for a mane and tail——

HONE.

CON.

PEST.

JEN.

GRUM.

MUG.

Speaking

together.

What a cure!

He was lacerated——

No jury alive——

The best farrier——

I'll never go to law then——

Fine paces——

EXCISE. Come, come, knock down silence—and knock down our honest neighbour Snob for a song.

SNOB. No, no, I'll tell you what we'll do; we'll sing our last new catch and glee.

EXCISE. So we will, and then we'll go home.

CATCH.

C A T C H.

*Come will you go, or will you not ?
 We'll only call for t'other pot ;
 'Tis a cold night, 'twill keep us warm,
 Another pot will do no harm.*

*No, let's be gone.
 The clock strikes one.*

*Well, let it strike, and strike again,
 'Tis time enough to count it when
 Our money's spent, and liquor gone,
 I then tell not me the clock strikes one.*

*Here, waiter, bring us t'other pot :
 Come, will you stay, or will you not.*

G L E E.

*Now wives and children make no noise,
 And care with mirth we season :
 Let's push about the bowl, my boys,
 For drinking is no treason.*

*Here's love and friendship—band and heart,
 To worth, here's health and freedom ;
 May every rogue have his desert,
 More friends to those who need them.*

SCENE

S C E N E VII.

SNOB, *Mrs.* NIPIKIN.

SNOB. Now being quite sober, and in my perfect senses, let me reflect a little about my affairs——What shall I do to extricate myself?—Suppose I strike up to old Mother Nipikin—that's the mark ! Stay—stay, here she comes ! I'll listen and here what sort of a humour she is in.

Mrs. NIP. Well, surely, nothing can be a more simpler contract, than for a woman of my prudence and virtue, to place her affections upon a rattle-pated boy ! If we like a man, the lightest hint sophisticates, whereas a boy proposes upon us.

SNOB. Madam, your humble servant. As to what you was a saying of a woman of your age and prudence, fixing your affections upon a boy, I agree with you, that it is a damn'd foolish thing ; we are all sophisticated, as you call it, at one time or another, by love. For instance now, you are as ugly, and as old as any gentlewoman need to be, yet I don't know how it is, I am stark mad in love with you, and can think of nothing else.

A I R

A I R.

*Whene'er I am mending a shoe,
Every thing in my stall that I view,
To my doating remembrance brings you,
While my heart in my bosom goes throb.*

*The best upper leather's your hair,
Your skin is the lining so fair,
My awl to your eyes I compare,
Which wounded the heart of poor Snob.*

II.

*Your teeth, which like ivory shew,
Are the pegs in a white even row,
Which I drive, while at every blow,
My heart in my bosom goes throb.*

*Each object of you bears a part,
Your wit, that's so piercing and smart,
Is my knife, but my lap-stone your heart,
Which will ne'er let you pity poor Snob.*

Mrs. NIP.

Mrs. NIP. Is the man mad?

SNOB. Why, don't I tell you I am—I am in love with you, and do you want a better proof of it?

Mrs. NIP. How dare you?

SNOB. Why to be sure, one had need of a little resolution—And yet now when you hide your face, you are not so disagreeable.

Mrs. NIP. Why, you villain!

SNOB. Don't be in a passion.

Mrs. NIP. To affront the wife of a man, who has requir'd such a fortune!

SNOB. Now don't spoil that sweet face of your's; I tell you, I have been in love with you a great while, though I never spoke of it before; I think of you from morning till night, and dream of you from night till morning; and when I sit in my stall, and reflect upon your beauty, and my unworthiness, I leave off whistling and fall a crying—She comes to—

Mrs. NIP. Why you surprize me, Mr. Snob!

SNOB. Why, Lord love you, I am surpris'd myself! but it is true, you are never out of my mind; you have more charms and graces than there are stitches in a shoe! and if you don't take compassion on me, I'll snatch up one of my own awls, and make an end of myself!

Mrs. NIP. Oh, I would not for the world have you kill yourself upon my account.

SNOB. Take me then to your arms!

(Goes to kiss her.)

Mrs. NIP. O fye!

SNOB. Nay, dear beautiful angel!

Mrs. NIP. How can you! *(struggling.)*

SNOB. Nectar and Ambrosia!

A I R.

*Be easy, can't you, fye, for shame!
 Dear me, how I am treated!
 I'm sure you'd not be so to blame,
 But that you're 'toxicated.*

*Pray, pray be quiet, neighbour Snob,
 Don't act now so contrary:
 Make love to me—a pretty job!
 I'm quite in a quandary.*

II.

*Surely the man's beside his wits,
 I won't then, Sir, be tumbled;
 You'll really fright me into fits,
 Oh, dear, how I am humbled!*

*Again! there's no enduring this;
 Well, there—are you contented?
 Better to give a fool a kiss,
 Than with him be tormented.*

S C E N E VIII.

SNOB, Mrs. NIPIKIN, NIPIKIN, and afterwards
 ALICE,

Mrs. NIP. Have done, you wicked creature!

SNOB. Oh extasy!—rapture!—inexpressible!—

Mrs. NIP. Ah.

SNOB. Zounds! what d'ye squall for?

Mrs. NIP. Don't you see my husband?—Oh, my
 dear Mr. Nipikin, I am glad you are come!

NIP.

NIP. What's the matter, my love?

Mrs. NIP. I was but clearing away the things, and this drunken fellow, who hid himself in a corner to rob the house, I suppose, seized upon me.

SNOB. Here's a devil for you!—now I shall settle my affairs with a vengeance!

NIP. Why, how dare you to attempt to behave in this scandalous manner to a woman of Mrs. Nipikin's consequence? Why, you must be the most brazen-fronted villain——

SNOB. Fronted! who's affronted? I an't.

Mrs. NIP. To be serv'd so, 'tis a shame! (*Cries.*

SNOB. Madam, if I said any thing to offend your delicacy—I give umbrage!—What can any man say more?—I—give—umbrage.

NIP. Go, you drunken, senseless villain! I'll punish you! you shan't be my tenant a day longer!—His wife us'd me like a vixen the last time I saw her—and to-morrow morning I'll as surely seize upon all your goods!—If the impudent jade had but given me one smile!

ALICE. Mr. Snob, why will you stay from me so? I was afraid some accident had happened to you.

SNOB. Why, my dear, there was a trifling one.

ALICE. What's the matter?

A I R.

Mrs. NIP. *Good ma'am, this here's the simple matter :
 Your pretty husband here thought fit,
 Finding me alone, to flatter
 This poor face, to shew his wit ;
 So thinking no such treatment right,
 Lest he some rudeness should commit,
 I scream'd, I own, with all my might.*

II.

SNOB. *Now let me speak—This accusation,
 Partly false, and partly true,
 Is meant to blind her inclination,
 Both from old Nipikin and you ;
 D'ye mind me, I say little—mum,
 I spoke, was in a charming cue,
 And so 'twas well her husband come.*

III.

NIP. *Ne'er mind him, he's a shameless villain !
 No one word's truth that he has said :
 Madam Nipikin, be willing,
 T'abuse the honour of my bed ;
 But you're rightly serv'd, d'ye see,
 And spurn your interest—in his stead,
 You know you might have conquer'd me.*

ALICE.

IV.

ALICE. *For you, good ma'am, I beg your pardon ;
No doubt you're right to be so nice :
For you, you brute, go on and harden,
Improving still in every vice.
I make my curtsy, Sir, to you,
Who have, I know full well, a spice
Of honesty in all you do.*

V.

CHORUS. *So now, our several lot's admiring,
Let's e'en go peaceably to bed ;
And every one, as they're retiring,
Reflect on what has now been said ;
To-morrow, when we all are cool,
Will, every thought of anger fled,
Shew who's the wit, and who the fool.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE I.

NIPKIN, *Mrs.* NIPKIN, *and afterwards*
FROTH.

NIP. **H**ERE it is!---Here's the inventory of the scoundrel's goods! Pest and I have taken care of him. —(*Reads.*)—"Inventory of the goods and chattels
" of Crispin Snob, the cobbler, of Guzzlewell. *Impri-*
" *mis*: Four joint stools, one of them with but two
" legs. *Item*: A large wainscot dining-table, wanting
" only one leaf. *Item*: A piece of tapestry hanging
" made use of to keep out the cold where the wall
" was broken down, with a curious story wrought
" on it, Juno lecturing Jupiter about his amours,
" the Jupiter perfect all but his thunder, which
" seems by some mistake to be in the hands of Juno."

Mrs. NIP. We'll have it fram'd, husband, and hang it under the stag's horns in the great hall.

NIP. "*Item*: A large book, bought at an auction
" out of Sir Michael Minikin's house; containing
" above three hundred and seventy prints of ma-
" caroni gentlemen and ladies, out of Mr. Darley's
" collection."

Mrs. NIP. We'll have them pasted upon a lemon ground, all the way upon our stair case.

NIP,

NIP. "*Item*: A black window curtain, formerly
" a pall belonging to Mr. Shroud, the undertaker.—

" *Item*——

FROTH. (*coming on*) Sir, Mr. Pest is asking for
you.

NIP. Very well, I'll come to him directly—I'll
hamper him, I'll teach him to behave ill to people of
consequence.

A I R.

*I'll teach such a fellow as this is, I will,
To use disrespect to his betters;
And that minx too, his wife, myself I could kill,
For wearing that baggage's fetters.
Shall I such indignity tamely receive,
Who at school went through every forum?
Have been constable since, overseer, under-shrieve,
Church-warden, and one of the Quorum?*

II.

*Of such impudence I never heard in my life;
He all fight of decency loses:
He runs in my debt, he makes love to my wife,
And if ask'd but to pay, he refuses.*

And shall I such indignity, &c.

SCENE

SCENE II.

The COBLER'S HOUSE.SNOB, *and* ALICE.

ALICE. Well, Sir, now I think you have pretty well done for yourself.

SNOB. Don't oppress the fallen, good wife; but who the devil could have thought that this old thief—

ALICE. Why I thought it, and I told you of it, but my comfort is, that it is owing to no fault of mine; I have taken care enough to discharge the duty of a wife, for I am sure there has not been one breakfast, dinner, or supper, for this twelve-month past, that I have not told you of a hundred and fifty faults, and all to no purpose.

SNOB. Prithee, prithee, don't upbraid me; what's to be done?

ALICE. I suppose I should get no thanks if I was to tell you.

SNOB. You tell me!

ALICE. Ay, I tell you: I have it in my power to make all well again. But what signifies getting you out of one hobble, when you would directly get into another.

SNOB. Ay, I wish it depended upon that.

ALICE. It does then; and if you'll promise to love me, and nobody else; to stay at home and mind your business for the future, I'll tell you how.

SNOB. I'll not only promise all thou hast ask'd, but perform it, which is better.

ALICE. Well, get behind that skreen, where you shall witness for me, that I have told you nothing but truth.

A I R.

A I R.

SNOB. *From henceforth only prove, dear wife,
That what you say be true;
Like any child, through all my life.
Will I be rul'd by you.*

*In all professions, every trade,
They always think it best,
For gen'ral good, that one be made
A chief above the rest.*

So from henceforth, &c.

*Your council only strokes his band,
Until the judge appears;
The captain may the ship command,
The pilot 'tis that steers.*

So from henceforth, &c.

*While novices will vainly try
The hounds to whistle back,
The huntsman gives the well-known cry,
And soon calls off the pack.*

So from henceforth, &c.

SCENE III.

FROTH, ALICE. SNOB *listening*.

FROTH. Ah, my sweet fragrant flower of beauty !
—here I come ! here's the money !—If I could but
have slid down through the tiles of the house, I
should have been a perfect Job in a shower of gold.

SNOB. So, so.

ALICE. Well, did you wheedle her nicely for me ?

FROTH. Who, the old woman ? There are twenty
guineas in that purse, and if they were all chang'd
into farthings you would not have as many pieces of
money, as I swore oaths and told lyes to get it.

ALICE. And are not you afraid to trust it to my
care ?

FROTH. My dear, if it was the treasure of Prue
and Mixico, I'd lay them at your feet—But I have
not a moment to stay ; I only call'd to bring you the
money—Take it, my master had just given it her to
pay the brewer.

ALICE. Well, and when shall we go off ?

FROTH. 'Twould be a pity to leave her yet, she is
in a devil of a generous humour—let us get all we can.

ALICE. Why, indeed, I should wish to decamp
like ourselves.

FROTH. Oh ! 'twill make a monstrous *eclat*, never
fear it. Adieu—my life—my soul—

SCENE

S C E N E IV.

SNOB, and ALICE.

SNOB. Your servant, Master Froth—But, Alice, how came I not to know of this before?

ALICE. Because it would have made you uneasy, and I thought I could not have a better opportunity than this; for while I expose him, I do you service.

SNOB. Come thou to my arms then; and thou to my pocket—Oh! how I long to be reveng'd upon the old woman.

ALICE. There is more revenge in your power yet.

SNOB. Ay!

ALICE. What would you say if I should expose the old fellow in the same manner?

SNOB. I'd hold thee up as a pattern for all wives—there should be nothing thou couldst ask but I'd grant.

ALICE. I hear him coming, begone!

AIR

SCENE V.

ALICE, NIPKIN, who she seems not to perceive, but who listens to her, and SNOB behind the screen.

A I R.

ALICE. *I'm bouna, alas! to curse the day,
That villain, Snob, came in my way;
Oh, oh, oh, oh!*

NIP. *Alone! in tears! something's abrew,
And this may be worth listening to.
So, so, so, so.*

SNOB. *How well the baggage puts on grief!
And see the looks of the old thief!
Ho, ho, ho, ho.*

ALICE. *First, to beat me black and blue,
Then run away and leave me too!
Oh, oh, oh, oh!*

NIP. *I'm always touch'd when beauty grieves;
Poor bosom! how it pants and heaves?
So, so, so, so.*

SNOB. *My treatment how the jade derides?
He's crying; I shall split my sides:
Ho, ho, ho, ho.*

ALICE.	} together	{	No wife was ever serv'd like me.
NIP.			I can't but cry for company.
SNOB.			The plot will take I plainly see.

ALICE.

ALICE. What shall I do?—The wicked man to run away, and leave such a good wife.

NIP. Run away!

SNOB. Well said, Alice.

ALICE. I shall never be looked upon again—but it serves me right—Fool as I was to affront poor Mr. Nipikin!

NIP. Poor Mr. Nipikin! Oh, Hoh!

ALICE. But I am always blind to my own interest, if I had not, I should have seen the difference; he's so smart, and so tender!

NIP. I see she'll hear reason now.

ALICE. And then his person is so agreeable!

NIP. She would not believe me, when I told her all his.

ALICE. So engaging!

NIP. Yes, yes, 'tis plain she has seen her error.

ALICE. But what signifies all these things now? He used to admire me to be sure; but now, how can I expect he'll cast away a look upon such a poor forlorn creature as I am?

NIP. I can't bear this!—Behold him here as much your admirer as ever!

A I R.

A I R.

*When we meet with a woman deserted,
Expos'd to the world and its cares;
Abandon'd, forlorn, tender-hearted,
And fearful each step of new snares.*

*'Tis of every man but the duty,
Whilst he sees her oppress'd with her fears;
By soothing,
And smoothing;
And vowing,
And bowing;
And ogling and figbing,
And melting and dying,
To give consolation to beauty,
And to persuade her to dry up her tears.*

II.

*Behold then your champion in me, Ma'am,
With pity I find you distress'd;
Confide, then you quickly shall see, Ma'am,
How gladly I serve the oppress'd.*

*Believe me, I think it my duty,
While I see you o'ercome with your fears,
By soothing,
And smoothing;
And vowing,
And bowing;
And ogling and figbing,
And melting and dying,
To give consolation to beauty,
And persuade you to dry up your tears.*

ALICE.

ALICE. Indeed, Sir, you don't know how cruelly I have been us'd?

NIP. Ah, I don't doubt it! the villain! what he is run away, is he?

ALICE. Yes, Sir.

NIP. The scoundrell! and he us'd to beat you, did he?

ALICE. Black and blue, Sir.

NIP. Such a sweet creature too! Oh, the hard hearted! What, and—and call you names?

ALICE. Every thing but Gentlewoman, Sir.

NIP. What people there are in the world? Well, you are quite sensible that you have been to blame, I suppose?

ALICE. Quite, Sir.

NIP. I am glad to hear it? And if I was to be kind to you, you'd be grateful?

ALICE. Indeed, Sir, I would: And since you encourage me, I'll tell you what I have been thinking of.

NIP. Well.

ALICE. That if you'd overlook all the ill usage you have receiv'd from me, and give me a sort of release for all my husband owes you, he'd come back again; for I have reason to believe he is not far off, and then every Monday night when he went to the club—

NIP. I could come and see you.

ALICE. Yes, Sir.

NIP. Adad, thou hast made me the happiest man in the world! And wilt thou be kind?

A I R.

ALICE. *I know not how to say you nay,
 There's something in your air so gay,
 So smart, genteel, and degage;
 In short, Sir, so uncommon;
 That even the most obdurate fair,
 For such perfection must declare;
 Alas! then, Sir, my blushes spare,
 For I'm a very woman.*

*Some fancy pers'nal graces,
 Some graces of the mind;
 Her love on you who places,
 Will all the graces find.*

NIP. I can hold no longer! (*takes out his pocket-book and writes*) there—there it is! I make thee a present of it, red Morocco pocket-book, silver-clasps and all.

ALICE. And I, as in duty bound, give it to my husband.

NIP. Oh, the devil, *he* here!

SCENE

S C E N E the last.

SNOB, NIPKIN, *Mrs. NIPKIN, and* ALICE.

NIP. And *she* here! now I'm in a pretty pickle indeed!

SNOB. Madam, I don't know what your business is with your husband, but you are come in excellent time to give him a lecture for making love to my wife.

Mrs. NIP. And this is the return for all the intention I have shewn you? but I am perfectly manur'd to ill-treatment.

SNOB. Come, hang it, we must not let her carry it off so.—Master Nipkin, ask her what she did with the twenty pounds you gave her to pay the brewer?

NIP. How's this!

Mrs. NIP. Why, what did I do with it?

ALICE. You gave it to your lover, Mr. Richard Froth, who gave it to me.

NIP. What d'ye mean?

ALICE. I'll explain.

F

A I R.

A I R.

'Twas in a village, near Castlebury,
 A Cocker and his Wife did dwell;
 And for a time no two so merry;
 Their happiness no tongue can tell:
 But to this couple, the neighbours tell us,
 Something did happen that caus'd much strife,
 For going to a neighbouring alehouse,
 The man got druck and beat his wife.

II.

But though he treated her so vilely,
 What did this wife, good creature do?
 Slept snug, and found a method sly,
 To wring his heart quite through and through;
 For Dick the tapster, and his master,
 By the report that then was rise,
 Were both in hopes, by this disaster,
 To gain the Cocker's pretty wife,

III.

While things went on to rack and ruin,
 And all their furniture was sold,
 She seem'd to approve what each was doing,
 And got from each a purse of gold:
 So when the Cocker's cares were over,
 He swore to lead an alter'd life,
 To mind his work, ne'er be a rover,
 And love no other but his wife.

We have now nothing to do, I think, my dear, but
 to thank you, Sir, for releasing us out of all our
 troubles; and you, Ma'am, for giving us money to
 set up afresh.

NIP.

NIP. The whole of one accusation, to my shame,
I confess.

Mrs. NIP. And I own I cannot deny one particle
of the other.

SNOB. I need not then advise you to be friends,
because one is as much to blame as the other. As
to the money, take it, Alice, do with it what you
please. Henceforward I'll be guided by you; and
if my neighbours ask me, why I am so happy, when
they hear me sing, as I work in my stall, I'll tell
them, 'tis because I have A WIFE OF TEN THOU-
SAND.

A I R.

SNOB. *Joy shall henceforth spring around,
Pleasure shall await our call;
And real happiness be found,
Within a lowly Cobler's stall.*

*Tho' sunk by fortune poor and low,
Did great ones see our happy life,
They'd wish their grandeur to forgo,
And imitate the Cobler's wife.*

II.

Mrs. NIP. *And what becomes of you and I?
Our pride, methinks, is taken down;
We've held, I fear, our heads too high,
To be thus humbled by a clown.*

*If then what's past you will forget,
For you're not wrong'd upon my life,
I'll mind the pattern she has set,
And imitate the Cobler's wife.*

ALICE.

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And imitate the Cobler's wife.*

ALICE.

III.

ALICE. 'Tis well resolv'd; and were the fair,
 But one and all, in the same mind,
 'T would save a world of grief and care;
 Wives would be blest, and husbands kind.

For to the cottage from the throne,
 The same desires bring joy and strife;
 One motive actuates alone,
 His Lordship's, and the Cobler's wife.

IV.

NIP. Now having caus'd this pretty rout,
 With fear and trembling overcome,
 I hardly know what I'm about;
 What shall I say when I get home?
 I never felt the like before;
 Yet there's one thing would give me life,
 Nor would I fear disquiet more,
 If you'd applaud the COBLER'S WIFE.



F I N I S.

